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THE PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER
13 January 1980

FBI's file on actress Jean Seberg much thicker than first admitted

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Los Angeles Times Service

WASHINGTON — The FBI conducted a much more pervasive investigation of the late actress Jean Seberg than just attempting to plant rumors that a member of the Black Panther Party had made her pregnant, her FBI file reveals.

The investigation, detailed in the file that the Los Angeles Times obtained under the Freedom of Information Act, included monitoring her bank dealings, keeping close tabs on her travel and disseminating logs of her conversations with Black Panther headquarters, which had been wiretapped.

Conducted from 1969 through 1972, the "discreet investigation," as an FBI memo described it, established that Miss Seberg had given thousands of dollars to the Panthers, a prime target on the bureau's list of extremist organizations.

The file disclosed that the then FBI director, J. Edgar Hoover, kept John D. Ehrlichman, President Richard M. Nixon's domestic affairs chief, advised of findings on Miss Seberg. Attorney General John N. Mitchell and Deputy Attorney General Richard G. Kleindienst also were given FBI reports on the actress, according to the file.

There was no indication, however, that they had been told of the FBI's attempt to smear Miss Seberg by linking her romantically with a Black Panther official and with Hakim Abdullah Jamal, identified as a black nationalist.

FBI documents, limited to the 1970 smear attempt, were released last September, after Miss Seberg had committed suicide in Paris. In doing so, FBI Director William H. Webster said such tactics were a thing of the past.

"We are out of that business forever," he said.

The more voluminous investiga-

tive file traced the probe to June 5, 1969, when the Los Angeles FBI field office was instructed to initiate an "active discreet investigation" to determine the extent of Miss Seberg's association with black nationalist groups.

On April 29, 1970, G. C. Moore, an FBI official who headed the headquarters section responsible for extremist groups, compiled a list of Black Panther Party contributors, including entertainment figures who had given a total of \$92,000. Miss Seberg's contribution was pegged at \$10,500.

On Feb. 23, 1970, an informant presumably inside the Black Panthers and described only as the FBI's "Source Three," reported that a Panther member had told Miss Seberg the Los Angeles chapter "was broke and needed money."

According to the source, Miss Seberg then gave \$2,500.

Earlier, the FBI reported, Miss Seberg paid the overdue union dues of Jamal and helped him to open an account at City National Bank in Los Angeles by giving him a personal check for \$5,000.

The file showed that the FBI funneled information on Miss Seberg to the Central Intelligence Agency, FBI "legal attaches" at U.S. embassies in Paris and Rome, military intelligence units and the Secret Service.

A photograph of Miss Seberg was given the Secret Service under the FBI's agreement to keep the agency better informed about potential presidential security threats in the aftermath of the 1963 assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

An accompanying form letter from Hoover said the FBI was providing the photograph either because Miss Seberg's background "is potentially dangerous" or because she was a member of a "group or organization inimical to U.S."

In 1969, the FBI concluded that placing Miss Seberg's name on a list of those whom the FBI would round up in case of a presidentially declared national emergency was not warranted. On Dec. 29, 1970, however, the FBI added her name to the list. Two years later, she was considered less of a threat and was downgraded to the so-called "administrative index."

The file disclosed that, in wiretapped telephone conversations with Black Panther offices, Miss Seberg used the alias of Aretha or Arisa.